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## PARIS—PITTSBURG.

The chorus of disapproval of the American building in the Rue des Nations at the Paris Exposition, swells with the return of the later visitors to the great show. The building was a mistake from the beginning, and as has been well said, resembles more than anything else a post-office. It is not only mortifying, but annoying, to all patriotic Americans to have their country so badly represented among the representative buildings of other nations, when a little forethought and study would and could so easily have given us a national building, that would not only have been creditable and representative, but one of the distinctive and unique features of the Show.

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Washington's house at Mount Vernon is an almost perfect type of colonial architecture, and represents in its exterior and in its interior arrangements and fitting, not only the architecture, but the painting and even the sculpture of a distinctive, and in architecture and painting, perhaps the best period of American art. This building should have been reproduced in petto at the Paris Exposition, and could have been filled with old Colonial furniture and appointments, and its walls hung with examples of Gilbert Stuart, the Peales, Sully, Allston, Malbone, and even Romney, for the great English portrait painter spent some time in America in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and painted many distinguished portraits here. Imagine the interest that Washington's house, reproduced in petto and filled with the best products of the most distinctive period in American Art, would have aroused among the visitors from all lands, for the name and career of Washington are almost as well known all over the civilized world as those of Napoleon! With what pride would Americans visiting Paris have studied this building and its contents. England reproduced an old manor house for its national building, and hung its walls with splendid examples of her early portrait and landscape painters, and there was no building representing any of the nations, with the exception of the American, that was not distinctive and national in architecture and in contents. The impression gained by the average visitor to Paris, therefore, was that America has not now, or never had, a distinctive architectural or art period or style.

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I was present on the morning when President Loubet made his one and only official visit to the United States Pavilion at the Paris Exposition—that particular morning when Commissioner-General Peck, although he had been fully apprised on a previous day of the hour when the President of France would call, was not on hand to meet him, although, fortunately, Ambassador Porter was there and did the honors, much more gracefully and courteously than "Peck, the Absurd," as he is generally called in Paris, could have done. I followed in the procession headed by Gen. Loubet and Ambassador Porter, that wended its way across the floor of the rotunda, climbed the stairways, and circled around one or two of the galleries. I was near President Loubet, and with mortification saw him looking here and there with an expression that plainly betokened his bewilderment at being walked through a building where there was nothing to see. The building, in fact, contained absolutely naught save rows of post-office boxes on the ground floor, some ordinary tables and chairs, in some of the rooms off the galleries, a few mediocre etchings and engravings, and on the walls of the staircases a number of the hard, highly-finished and crudely-colored portraits representing different racial types by Hubert Vos, a Dutchman, who has only recently become naturalized, and is in no sense an American painter.

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This acceptance and hanging of the Vos racial type portraits in the United States Pavilion was another example of the petty

politics played by the American commissioners at Paris, and of the mortifying results of ring rule in the art department, particularly, that so marred the American display at the Show. Elsewhere in this issue attention has been called to the unrepresentative character of the American Picture Exhibit in the Grand Palais. One would have thought that when it came to the question of adorning the walls, even those of the staircases of the American Pavilion, that pictures by Americans would have been chosen for the purpose. Hubert Vos, who is a fairly good painter and a good fellow, married two years ago a Mrs. Graham, who was formerly, I believe, a Hawaiian princess, and who is a beautiful and charming woman. Since his marriage, Mr. Vos has decided to become a United States citizen, and, as I have said, was naturalized a few months ago. It was perhaps complimentary to the United States that Mr. Vos wished to be represented in the American Art section. His canvases were, however, not accepted by the American Jury, I must say very properly, and then his wife started a campaign in Paris to have them hung in the American building. In this she was successful. Other really foreign painters, who by accident of birth call themselves Americans, were more lucky than Mr. Vos, and got their pictures into the American Art Section of the Grand Palais, and thus made it look like a reflection of the French galleries.

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I don't blame Mr. and Mrs. Vos for their efforts and success in having these portraits of racial type hung on the staircase walls of the United States Pavilion. I do blame, however, Commissioner Peck and the other members of the Art and other juries at Paris that permitted them to be hung where they were. I am not attacking Mr. Vos nor his art, and I welcome him to the ranks of American painters. He has done good work in portraiture, and even these less successful racial type pictures are interesting and valuable to the ethnologist and the physiognomist. But they did not belong in the American Pavilion.

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It was rather a curious lapse on the part of the French Jury of the French picture exhibit at Paris not to have had a larger and more representative exhibit of the works of the great modern *plein air* or *Giverny* school of Monet and his pupils and followers. Even Monet's fellow-figure impressionist, Manet, and his followers, notably Degas, were not well represented. This lapse proves that the United States was not the only country at Paris which showed a lack of appreciation of what was distinctive in its art. Even those who differ with me in my high estimate of the exceeding strength and importance of the modern French impressionistic school, must agree with me that it marks the most distinctive and, in fact, the only radical movement in modern French art, and that it has influenced, and is influencing, the art of the world. This being so, one would naturally have supposed that the works of Manet and Monet, and their followers, would have preponderated in the French Section, and would have given character to the display. As a matter of fact, they were few in number and, with some notable exceptions, were not remarkable or representative in any way. I saw at the Durand-Ruel galleries in this city last spring, a dozen landscapes by Monet, and perhaps a score more by Pissarro and Sisley, that had they been shown together at Paris, would have drawn admiring throngs. How much more interesting such an exhibit would have been than the acres upon acres of huge canvases, technically clever, perhaps, but theatrical in subject and treatment, and morbid and repellent in conception, and that could be called anything but manifestations of a decayed art! What a relief from the too graphic pictured horrors of some old battle, shipwreck, or famine-besieged town, were even the few *Giverny* landscapes, with their pearly, opalescent, tender

tints and hues of dawn and sunset on the Seine, or of harvest fields at noontide, with God's own air and sunlight flooding all.

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At the advent of another art season in New York, the question of a display and sale of spurious pictures in certain auction-rooms and dealers' galleries comes again to the fore. I am told that a bill is being drawn to be presented at the Legislature when it meets at Albany in January, providing for the punishment of any auctioneer or dealer who can be convicted of having sold any painting or art object which he cannot prove to be original with the painter, sculptor, or artisan whose name is upon it, or to whom he has attributed it without reservation. There are difficulties in the way both of framing and of passing such a bill. It is probably as difficult to prove the authenticity of an old work of art as to disprove such authenticity, and it is quite as possible for an honest dealer or auctioneer to be deceived as a buyer or even expert. The difficulty in passing such a bill will probably be found in the opposition of a lobby, for there are unquestionably large moneyed interests which would oppose through the lobby, any such bill. I should not be sorry, however, to have the bill framed and presented, for even if it does not pass, it will direct public attention to the abuses of the picture auction and selling business, and will be a benefit to the reputable and honest auctioneers and dealers. If I might suggest to the framers of the proposed bill, I would say, that a provision could be included in it to the effect, that if a dealer or auctioneer should be given proofs of having sold a spurious picture or art object, he should be relieved from penalty or punishment by immediately refunding to the purchaser the amount paid for such spurious painting or art object, plus the amount of any expense or commission, cartage, etc. Such provision, which might also have a further clause to the effect that if said spurious art object were offered again by the same dealer or auctioneer for sale, a double penalty and punishment would be imposed without recourse, would amply protect the reputable dealer or auctioneer who might make a mistake, and would give a chance of reform to the dishonest vendor.

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This subject is one which, after all, affects the honest dealers and auctioneers even more than the public, and they should be the chief supporters of the proposed bill. There are a number of dealers and a few auctioneers in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and even in one or two of the Western cities, of unquestioned business probity and long experience, who would no more willingly sell a spurious work of art than they would cheat their butcher or grocer. And yet these reputable men are under general suspicion at times, by the undiscriminating art public, when exposures of fraudulent sales occur. A new buyer of large purse and limited art education and experience reads now and then of the sale of pictures, afterwards found to be spurious, of resulting litigation, etc., which, by the way, generally ends in favor of the vendor; or, perchance, drifts into some auction-room or second-rate shop, and is himself swindled. He becomes distrustful of the whole art business, draws his purse together, and a good customer is lost to the reputable dealer.

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It may be Quixotic to hope or expect that in a new country like the United States, where art is still young, and where opportunities for art education have not been vouchsafed to a majority of art lovers and collectors, that this abuse of dealing in spurious works of art can be put down, when it still exists in England and on the Continent. I have been frequently struck in reading the record of art sales, particularly of pictures in London and Paris, with the very low figures at which old masters have been disposed of. When one reads, for example, that a Rubens sold for £10 and a Titian for £5, at a London

auction sale, one can only assume that these were spurious examples of these masters, and yet the description of these canvases in the catalogues gives no indication that there is any doubt to their authenticity. What is winked at, at Christy's or the Hotel Drouot, the opposers of the proposed bill here will probably urge in private, if not in public, need not be spat upon in New York. One wrong does not make another right, however, and if England and France cannot put down the business of dealing in spurious pictures, the United States, or at least New York, can creditably make an effort in that direction.

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The annual exhibition of the Carnegie Institute at Pittsburg will soon open and is eagerly anticipated in art circles everywhere. I wonder whether this year the directors of the Institute will afford any facilities to the art critics and writers of the country to visit the exhibition, particularly on press day? Thus far they have confined themselves to sending invitations to said press view, and possibly occasionally a season ticket to this or that writer. They have not failed, however, during the progress of the exhibition, and for months preceding its opening, to mail notices and articles advertising the display, giving the makeup of the jury, with biographical details, etc., to the artists, critics, and writers of the dailies and weekly papers, with the result that these obliging persons have duly recorded all matters of interest pertaining to the exposition, and have given it an immense amount of free advertising.

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Pittsburg is considerably removed in distance from the other art centers of the country, and the time and expense necessary to visit it count for much to the majority of art writers and critics. The dailies and weeklies are not so fond of art that they are willing, as a rule, to pay for the time and expense of their art writers or critics to visit Pittsburg. Would it not be a generous and at least an appreciative action on the part of the Carnegie Institute Directors to provide transportation for the representative art critics and writers of the country, to and from Pittsburg from say, at least, New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Chicago, Cincinnati, and St. Louis. This suggestion is made with much diffidence, and is intended in no sense as a personal request or suggestion. It is offered primarily in behalf of the Institute, to whose Directors, it is kindly to suppose, the idea has never occurred, especially when they send out their notices and articles with "request to print."

ICONOCLAST.

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That clever Californian artist, Helen Hyde, is constantly showing her versatility. At Macbeth's Gallery there may be seen some of the work she is doing at present in Japan. She paints on blocks, one block for each color. These are destroyed after printing, leaving a limited number of remarkably beautiful impressions. The example shown the other day was a Japanese woman carrying a child. The lines are distinct and of sure drawing, the tints are laid in with fine harmony of tone, in one place pink lying over a sage green, forming a beautiful combination through which the grain of the wood added a delicate ground.

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A new annual prize will be offered at the next Academy Exhibition. It will consist of a gold medal, of \$100 coinweight, to be called the "George Inness Medal," and is offered by Inness, Jr., to the memory of his father. Although all the particulars have not yet been fully arranged by the Council, it is the intention of Mr. Inness to have the medal awarded to the best picture in the Exhibition, without regard to subject, and, that it be open to all exhibitors.

A dignified memorial, indeed, and one singularly appropriate.